IN THE CLAIMS:

1. (Currently Amended) A composite cord having a 1 x n construction where n is an integer from 3 to 12 with from 2 to 11 metallic filaments and from 1 to 5 polymer fibers selected from the group consisting of polyethylene fiber and polypropylene fiber having a melting point of from 50°C to 200 °C twisted together, wherein no fiber constitutes a core of the composite cord and where polymer fibers are positioned between at least some ~~laterally~~ peripherally adjacent metallic filaments such that at least some polymer fibers are not totally surrounded by metallic filaments whereby gaps are formed between at least some ~~laterally~~ peripherally adjacent metallic filaments after the polymer fibers are softened or melted under vulcanization conditions.

2. (Original) The composite cord (1) according to claim 1, wherein the metallic filament (M) has a diameter of from 0.15 mm to 0.45 mm.

3. (Cancelled)

4. (Previously Presented) A pneumatic tire employing for its reinforcing element a composite cord having a 1 x n construction (n is an integer from 3 to 12) with from 2 to 11 metallic filaments and from 1 to 5 polymer fibers having a melting point of from 50°C to 200°C twisted together.

5. (Previously Presented) The composite cord according to claim 1, wherein the polymer fiber and metallic filaments are twisted together at approximately constant pitches and displaced from one another in a longitudinal direction.

6. (Previously Presented) The pneumatic tire according to claim 4, wherein the polymer fiber and metallic filaments are twisted together at approximately constant pitches and displaced from one another in a longitudinal direction.

7. (Previously Presented) The composite cord according to claim 1, wherein the metallic filaments do not form a sheath around the core.

8. (Previously Presented) The composite cord according to claim 4, wherein the metallic filaments do not form a sheath around the core.

9. (Currently Amended) A pneumatic tire comprised of a carcass employing for its reinforcing element a composite cord having a 1 x n construction where n is an integer from 3 to 12 with from 2 to 11 metallic filaments and from 1 to 5 polymer fibers having a melting point of from 50°C to 200°C twisted together, wherein no fiber constitutes a core of the composite cord and where polymer fibers are positioned between at least some ~~laterally~~ peripherally adjacent metallic filaments such that at least some polymer fibers are not totally surrounded by metallic filaments whereby gaps are formed between at least some ~~laterally~~ peripherally adjacent metallic filaments after the polymer fibers are softened or melted under vulcanization conditions, the end count of said composite cords per 50 mm width of said carcass ranging from 10-55.

10. (Previously Presented) The pneumatic tire of claim 9, wherein said end count ranges from 20-45.

11. (Currently Amended) A composite cord having a 1 x n construction where n is an integer from 3 to 12 with from 2 to 11 metallic filaments and from 1 to 5 polymer fibers having a melting point of from 50°C to 200°C twisted together, wherein no fiber constitutes a core of the composite cord and where polymer fibers are positioned between at least some ~~laterally~~ peripherally adjacent metallic filaments such that at least some polymer fibers are not totally surrounded by metallic filaments whereby gaps are formed between at least some ~~laterally~~ peripherally adjacent metallic filaments after the polymer fibers are softened or melted under vulcanization conditions, said polymer fibers and metallic filaments being twisted together at approximately constant pitches, while being displaced from one another in a longitudinal direction to prevent any fiber or filament from forming a core of the composite cord.

12. (Currently Amended) A carcass of a pneumatic tire comprised of a composite cord having a 1 x n construction where n is an integer from 3 to 12 with from 2 to 11 metallic filaments and from 1 to 5 polymer fibers having a melting point

of from 50°C to 200°C twisted together, wherein no fiber constitutes a core of the composite cord and where polymer fibers are positioned between at least some ~~laterally~~ peripherally adjacent metallic filaments such that at least some polymer fibers are not totally surrounded by metallic filaments whereby gaps are formed between at least some ~~laterally~~ peripherally adjacent metallic filaments after the polymer fibers are softened or melted under vulcanization conditions.

13. (Previously Presented) The pneumatic tire of claim 9, wherein said polymer fibers are selected from the group consisting of polyethylene fiber and polypropylene fiber.

14. (Previously Presented) The composite cord of claim 11, wherein said polymer fibers are selected from the group consisting of polyethylene fiber and polypropylene fiber.

15. (Previously Presented) The carcass of claim 12, wherein said polymer fibers are selected from the group consisting of polyethylene fiber and polypropylene fiber.